

Carmel Mountain

8.1.2



© City of San Diego, 2003

This page is intentionally left blank.

8.1.2.a Carmel Mountain (H 31 – 32, H 38)

Site Description and Existing Conditions

Carmel Mountain (H 31-32, H 38) is a 300-acre preserve area that was acquired by the City of San Diego for open space in 1998. It is located south of SR 56 in the Carmel Mountain Community Planning Area, and surrounds the Neighborhood 10 Community Park on the east, west and north. The site, which is partially within the MHPA and is zoned Open Space, is owned and managed by the Park and Recreation Department.

Thirty vernal pools (1,291 m² of combined basin area [0.319 acres]), including both natural vernal pools and road ruts, were mapped at Carmel Mountain. Soils include Redding gravelly loam, Carlsbad gravelly loamy sand and Huerhuero complex loamy alluvial land. Upland vegetation is characterized by chamise chaparral with herbaceous cover such as *Erodium* spp. *B. sandiegonensis* utilizes the vernal pool habitat at Carmel Mountain; no sensitive plant species have been reported from this site.

Prior to preservation, the site was impacted by off-road vehicles; gates were installed following acquisition of the site for open space. It is currently utilized for passive recreation, and official trails have been designated to minimize impacts to on-site resources. The preserve will be managed in conformance with the *Carmel Mountain and Del Mar Mesa Resource Management Plan* (RECON, 2005).

Threats

Development

Carmel Mountain was conserved through acquisition by the City of San Diego.

Invasive Species

Vegetation species at Carmel Mountain are primarily native; however, some non-native grasses and *Erodium* spp. occur.

Trespass

The public is allowed limited, non-motorized access to Carmel Mountain. Trespass by off-road vehicles may occur in unlikely instances. Gates have been installed across vehicle access routes.

Fire

Carmel Mountain is part of several large, inter-connected open space areas where fire plays an important role in the natural ecology. Portions of the site burned in 1986 and during the 1990s, although the vernal pool basins did not burn. At other vernal pool sites in San Diego, comparisons of pre- and post-fire surveys do not support the conclusion of long-term damage to sensitive species or their physical habitat. Therefore, fire does not appear to threaten the species presence or abundance of vernal pool ecosystems.

Fire Suppression

During an emergency, this site may be utilized for fire suppression activities. A fire management plan has been prepared, and is included in the *Carmel Mountain and Del Mar Mesa Resource Management Plan* (RECON, 2005). Section 10, entitled Fire

Management, includes information on fire history and the historic role of fire, objectives, fire management units, as well as requirements for reporting, extinguishing and reviewing fires that occur on Carmel Mountain.

Current Management Activities

Maintenance and management activities will be conducted in accordance with the *Carmel Mountain and Del Mar Mesa Resource Management Plan* (RECON, 2005).

Activities will include:

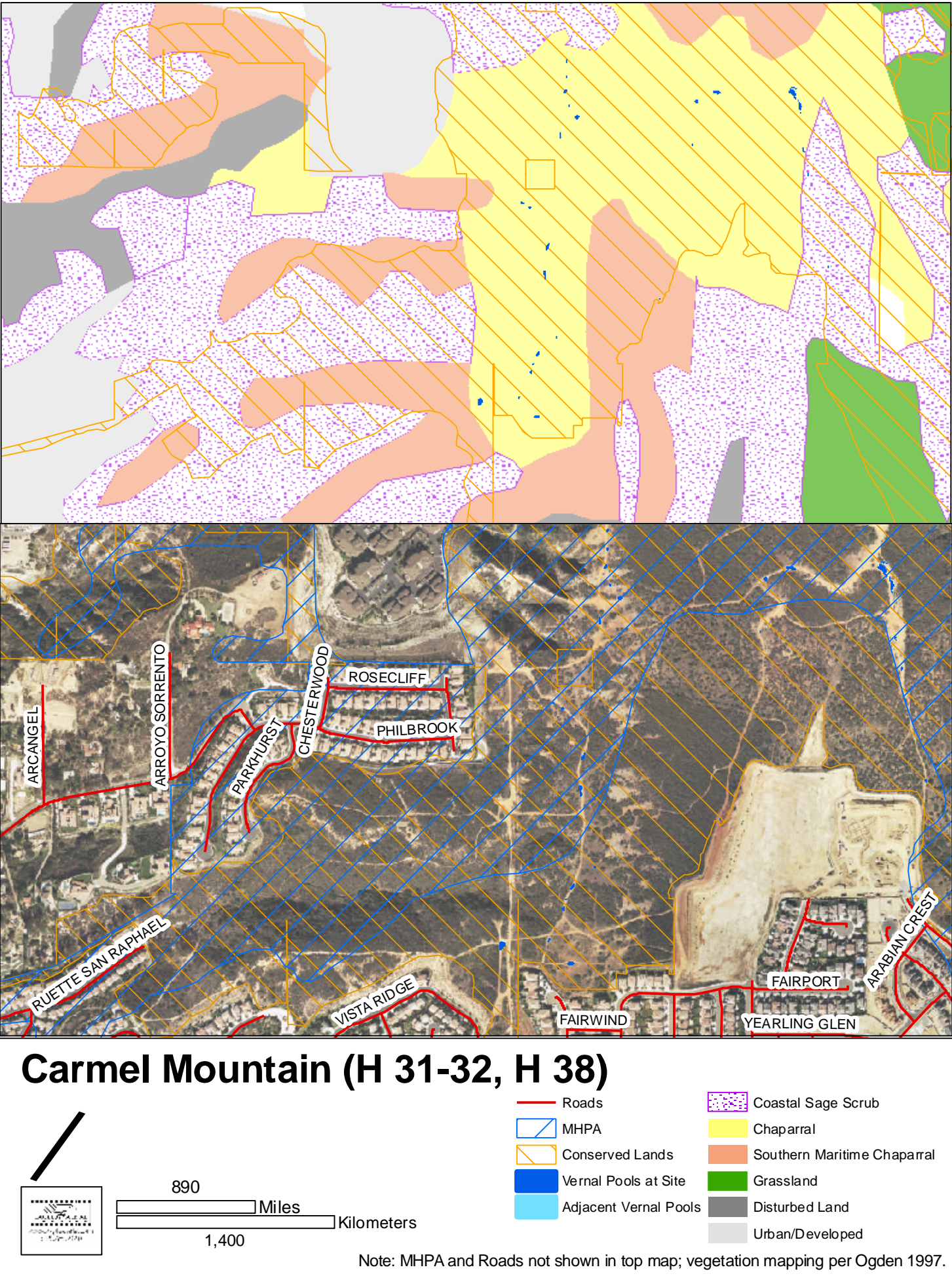
- 1) Maintenance of existing SDGE easements along roads containing road ruts;
- 2) Installation and regular maintenance of trails, trash bins and other facilities in a manner to limit public interaction with and impact to sensitive resources;
- 3) Control of exotic species through monitoring and prompt removal;
- 4) Public and volunteer awareness efforts including interpretive signage and programs and resource protection outreach;
- 5) Removal of transient encampments through cooperation with the appropriate law enforcement agencies; and
- 6) Minimization of edge effects through lighting restrictions, fencing/barriers, trash removal, removal of problem species and public awareness.

The Resource Management Plan also lists opportunities for restoration of vernal pools and upland habitats.

Management Recommendations

Seek funding for vernal pool restoration projects recommended in the *Carmel Mountain and Del Mar Mesa Resource Management Plan* (RECON, 2005).

Figure 8



This page is intentionally left blank.